

BRAC IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY – January 19, 2010

○ **AGENDA FOR THE 6:30 MC-DOT MEETING:**

- Introduce the study
- Limits/Study Area
- Potential Funding Sources
 - DAR Grant application
 - TIGER grant application
- Summary and purpose of NEPA/Planning study, including general outline of public outreach efforts
- Review the summary Purpose and Need
- Review the accelerated schedule for completing the planning
 - Steps and milestones in planning
 - Constraints imposed by grants (DAR and TIGER)
 - Concurrent effort to be “ready” with construction strategy
- Solicit feedback on Purpose and Need and potential alternatives

○ **AGENDA FOR 7:30 BRAC COMMITTEE MEETING:**

- **The Usual Updates** from the County’s BRAC Coordinator and MC-DOT, MDOT, NNMC, and/or the Neighborhood Coalition;
 - **Brief discussion of Congressional earmark** for BRAC-related traffic mitigation for Bethesda and Fort Belvoir military hospitals.
- **Committee discussion following-up on MC-DOT’s 6:30 Public Meeting** on the Purpose and Need Statement for the proposed Multi-Modal Pedestrian Access Project between NNMC and the Medical Center Metro Station
- **Cutbacks on Ride On routes serving Medical Center** – From BIC Member Seth Maiman: While acknowledging that the proposed cuts are a result of budgetary constraints and do not reflect any policy consideration, they fly in the face of all of the work of the BIC and the hundreds of millions of taxpayers dollars that will be spent to mitigate traffic in the Medical Center area. This action would simply add a great number of vehicles on the roads and clog already filled Metro parking lots, backing up traffic even further.
- **(Time permitting): Discussion led by BRAC Committee Chairman John Carman** following-up on July Committee discussion of “long range vision issues.” John has asked the members of the BRAC Committee to consider and be prepared to discuss these questions:
 1. Strengths of my neighborhood – Why did I move here?

2. Weaknesses of my neighborhood – What would make me move away?
3. What distinguishes my community from others?
4. Opportunities of my neighborhood – How can we make it better?
5. Threats to my neighborhood – What is worrying me?
6. Defining the ideal neighborhood – “Long term vision.”
7. What do I need to know? – Questions for government and planning officials.

- **6:30 MC-DOT Presentation: NEPA Study – MD 355 Multimodal Crossing:** Edgar Gonzalez led an MCDOT Public Meeting to discuss the NEPA Process and the Purpose and Need Summary, and to obtain input from the community on the Multimodal Crossing Study at Rockville Pike (MD 355) between the Medical Center Metro station and the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda. This was just the beginning of the NEPA process for this project. Edgar announced that the County’s BRAC web site will have a page devoted to the NEPA Study, and that a DRAFT Purpose & Needs Statement would be posted within a few days:

<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/brcimpl.asp?url=/content/exec/brac/nepa-pedaccess.asp>

Edgar addressed the internet rumors about a “secret County project” for a Beltway ramp into the Navy campus. It is not true and there is no such project, secret or otherwise. In 2008 SHA did produce a technical paper on a ramp concept at the request of the County’s BRAC Implementation Committee. SHA deemed the concept not feasible. In 2009, after a private company approached residents and local officials with an unsolicited new concept, SHA did another technical paper and again deemed the concept not feasible. There are no County plans or projects for a Beltway ramp.

Art Holmes addressed another rumor about a 4-lane highway connecting the Navy to NIH. He said that ill-informed members of an advocacy group have spread misinformation about the County’s proposal for a multimodal underpass, which would not be wide enough for 4 vehicular lanes. It would have bike and pedestrian paths, plus two lanes for inter-campus vehicles, such as ambulances as shuttle buses, if NIH and Navy someday agree to a plan to connect their campuses for that purpose.

Janie Tiedeman, of URS Corporation, the County’s consultant on the multimodal project, led the audience through a PowerPoint presentation on the NEPA process:

- **MCDOT PowerPoint:**
<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/exec/brac/pdf/pedaccess-underpass-nepa-mcdotpresentation-011910.pdf>
- **Comments Form:**
<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/exec/brac/pdf/pedaccess-underpass-nepameeting-commentform-011910.pdf>

After Q&A with the audience, the meeting was adjourned at 7:25.

- **John Carman called the BRAC Implementation Committee to order at 7:40 p.m.**
 - With a large new audience in attendance, John explained the nature of the Committee and how it conducts its meetings.
 - Council President Naney Floreen gave welcoming remarks and thanked the Committee members for their hard and long-suffering work.
- **Phil provided his monthly BRAC Updates:**
 - **TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS:**
 - **UPDATED BRAC TRANSPORTATION MOBILITY PROJECT MATRIX, as of 12-28-09:**
http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/exec/brac/pdf/transpo_project_matrix-122809.pdf
 - **10-6-09 Bethesda BRAC Transportation Investment Priorities:** A joint MDOT/MC-DOT memo listing phased implementation of projects and funding streams:
<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/exec/brac/pdf/bracprojects-tiers-100609.pdf>
 - 11-17-09 Description of “Tiers” and “Phases” of Intersections Improvement Program:
<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/exec/brac/pdf/intersections-tiersphases-summary-111709.pdf>
 - **MAJOR FEDERAL FUNDING FOR BRAC-RELATED TRAFFIC MITIGATION:**
 - On December 15th, 2009 the House of Representatives passed the FY2010 Defense Appropriations bill, which included a remarkable \$300 MILLION appropriation designated specifically for BRAC-related transportation infrastructure improvement at Bethesda and Fort Belvoir. The Senate passed the bill on December 19th and the President signed it into law the same day. This was a major legislative achievement and we are most grateful to Congressman Chris Van Hollen and Senators Barbara Mikulski and Ben Cardin for their leadership.
 - Appropriation language:
<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/exec/brac/pdf/fy10defapprops-transpofunding-bethesdabelvoirhospitals-121609.pdf>

- Congressman Chris Van Hollen's 12-22-09 News Release:
<http://vanhollen.house.gov/News/DocumentSingle.aspx?DocumentID=164521>
 - While the appropriations language does not mention NNMC Bethesda or Fort Belvoir by name, it does reference the May, 2009 BRAC Health Systems Advisory Subcommittee Report, which was all about the progress in achieving the goal of constructing "world class" military medical facilities. One of the Report's concerns was that gridlock around these military hospitals could compromise the mission of providing world class care to our wounded, active and retired military personnel.
 - The May, 2009 BRAC Health Systems Advisory Subcommittee Report (68 pp):
<http://www.health.mil/dhb/meetings/NCR%20BRAC%20HSAS%20Report%20-%20Final.pdf>
 - Bottom line: Congress has mandated DOD to report back within 90 days (or by approx. March 19) with a plan to apply the \$300 Million to ensure that transportation infrastructure around NNMC Bethesda and Fort Belvoir Community Hospital will support BRAC growth. There are numerous projects pending or proposed to mitigate BRAC-related traffic around both installations. This is tremendous news for the military hospitals at Bethesda and Belvoir that depend on a reliable transportation infrastructure and for the communities that are heavily impacted by BRAC growth. You can be assured that our congressional delegation and state and local officials will work with Defense Department officials to determine which projects around NNMC and Fort Belvoir will be funded through this appropriation.
 - There was extended discussion and frustration about how this innovative earmark process would work, how the funds would be disbursed, and how community members can have input in those decisions. At this time negotiations will take place between Congressional members and staff and DOD officials and staff. Local officials can expect to work through the congressional delegation. Phil assumed that the "Tiers and Phases," which total \$127-157 million (depending whether the SHA \$30 million budget for the intersections project is included) would serve as a framework for DOD/Congressional discussions. Ollie Oliveria noted that DOD staff are already well-engaged with Congressional staff
- **1-21-10 COUNTY PLANNING BOARD STAFF TO BRIEF PLANNING BOARD ON SHA INTERSECTIONS AND OTHER PROJECTS:**

- Planning Board staff will brief the Board at 1:00 p.m. on Thursday, January 21, 2010 on the status of the SHA intersections project. This meeting is open to the public but public testimony will not be taken at this briefing. Public testimony will be part of the subsequent Mandatory Referral hearings later in the spring. The Park and Planning Commission is located at 8787 Georgia Avenue in downtown Silver Spring. If you cannot attend these sessions you can follow them live on the Internet.
 - Planning Board calendar:
<http://www.montgomeryplanningboard.org/about/boardbusiness.shtml>
 - Planning Board webcast:
http://www.montgomeryplanningboard.org/planning_board_live/board_live.shtml

- **ARMY ANNOUNCES CONSTRUCTION CONTRACT FOR NATIONAL MUSEUM OF HEALTH AND MEDICINE, WHICH WILL BE RELOCATED TO THE FOREST GLEN ANNEX IN SILVER SPRING.**
 - Late in December the Army announced that Costello Construction of Columbia, MD has been awarded the primary contract to construct the new National Museum of Health and Medicine building in Silver Spring. There may be subcontracting opportunities for area businesses.
 - 12-31-09 US. Army News Release:
<http://www.defense.gov/contracts/contract.aspx?contractid=4191>
 - Costello Construction web site:
<http://www.costelloconstruction.com/index.php>
 - National Museum of Health and Medicine:
<http://nmhm.washingtondc.museum/>

- **LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR ANTHONY BROWN ISSUES 2009 PROGRESS REPORT ON MARYLAND'S STATEWIDE BRAC ACTION PLAN:**
 - 2009 Progress Report :
<http://www.brac.maryland.gov/documents/BRACProgressReport2009.pdf>
(120 pp)
 - 1-5-10 Lieutenant Governor Brown News Release:
<http://www.governor.maryland.gov/ltgovernor/pressreleases/100105.asp>

- **9-22-09 SHA TECHNICAL PAPER ON WHY A BELTWAY EXIT RAMP MAY NOT BE FEASIBLE has been added to the BRAC web site:**
http://www.e-mdot.com/Planning/brac/BRAC_Slip_Ramp_2009_9_22.pdf

- **OTHER UPDATES:**

- Ilaya Hopkins reported that the Coalition of Military Medical Center Neighbors had sent a letter to Lt. Gov. Brown and County Executive Leggett expressing its desires for how the congressional earmark would be used.
- Ollie Oliveria reported that BRAC Phase 2 on-campus project work has begun, with preparations for construction of a new gym, parking garage, and barracks. He noted that some trees need to be removed, but that new foliage will be planted.
- Ken Strickland expressed the gratitude of the Chevy Chase Valley community to the County for restoring for a traffic study to help determine possible mitigations for BRAC-related impacts in that area.

- **John Carman led a Follow-Up Discussion on the NEPA Study, by soliciting views from each Committee member. Responses included:**

- Whether WMATA plans will be considered in initial and ongoing phases of the NEPA study;
- Whether DAR language approved in the past by DOD will still apply;
- Whether coordination between DOD, federal, state and local officials will change the plans that have been agreed upon to date, based on different funding streams, and whether the new earmark will be able to fund the best plans that officials may devise.
- How “multimodal” will be defined, and whether vehicular capability is essential for the underpass to move forward.
- When does input on Purpose & Need close? Edgar noted that agencies should complete their input on a DRAFT document soon, and that it will be a living document that can be revised during the NEPA process.
- The Metro station should be treated as a true transit hub, and that multi-modal solutions can focus on that hub.

- **John led a discussion about the District 16 Delegation letter expressing concern about proposed County cutbacks to RideOn routes that serve BRAC-impacted neighborhoods in Bethesda and Chevy Chase, such as the Route 30 bus. (The letter is posted on the web site with this summary).**

- It was noted that cutting RideOn in those areas flies in the face of efforts to reduce SOVs and promote transit ridership. Jennifer Hughes and Nancy Floreen gave detailed explanations of the severe budget crisis facing the County, and that many services will face cutbacks. Edgar Gonzalez said that, unfortunately, bus routes with the lowest ridership would naturally be the first to be cut. Ollie said that these cutbacks severely impacts NNMC personnel, too, and will force many back into cars, requiring the Navy to construct more garages and bring more cars into

the region. On the other hand, there was concern that possible efforts to use the congressional earmark to backfill bus routes could infringe on efforts to construct new, high priority long-term transit-oriented projects such as the pedestrian underpass.

- **John distributed copies of the “Vision Matrix that had been compiled over the last month, with plans for Committee discussion at a future meeting.**

- **John opened the floor to the audience for brief questions or comments.**
 - Edgar was asked if the earmark covers all the “Tiers and Phases.” It is not clear but the assumption is yes.
 - Would eminent domain, if needed for any of the SHA intersections projects, be funded under the earmark? Yes, ROW purchase is part of the SHA budget.
 - Richard Hoyer raised concerns about snow removal in pedestrian areas after the December blizzard, and inattention to certain neighborhood sidewalk and bike paths repairs or construction.
 - There was discussion whether the BIC should send a letter to the County Executive or Council about RideOn cuts, but it was determined that each Committee member should act on their own discretion.
 - Pedestrian safety concerns were raised about work at the Metro pedestrian crossing or other main intersections. Edgar assured that pedestrian safety is always a top priority.

- **The meeting was adjourned at 9:25 p.m. The next Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 16, 2010, 7:30 p.m., at the BCC Regional Services Center.**

(NOTE THIS ATTENDANCE LIST COVERS BOTH THE 6:30 and 7:30 MEETINGS)

Committee members in attendance, January 19, 2010:

Phil Alperson, County BRAC Coordinator

John Carman, Committee Chairman

Larry Cole, Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission

Dave Dabney, Bethesda Urban Partnership

Edgar Gonzalez, Montgomery County Department of Transportation

Leslie Weber for Brian Gragnoli, Suburban Hospital

Ken Hartman, Bethesda-Chevy Chase Regional Services Center

Ilaya Hopkins, East Bethesda Citizens Assn.

Ginanne Italiano, Greater Bethesda-Chevy Chase Chamber of Commerce

Ed Krauze, Bethesda-Parkview Citizens Association

Janet Maalouf, Maplewood Citizens Association

Debbie Michaels, Glenbrook Village Home Owners Association

George Milne, Stone Ridge School

Patrick O'Neill, Greater Bethesda-Chevy Chase Chamber of Commerce

Andy Scott, MDOT
Paul Thaler, Locust Hill Citizens Association
Sara Morningstar for Melanie Wenger, Montgomery County Office of Intergovt. Relations
Susan Hinton for Dan Wheeland, NIH

Ex-officio:

Susan Isenberg (Delegate Bill Bronrott)
Jahantab (J-Tab) Siddiqui (Sen. Barbara Mikulski)
Ken Reichard (Sen. Ben Cardin)
Joan Kleinman (Rep. Chris Van Hollen)
Council Member Roger Berliner
Susan Buffone (Council Member Roger Berliner)
Jeff Miller, NNMC Transportation Program Manager
David "Ollie" Oliveria, NNMC BRAC Program Manager
Captain Daniel Zinder, NNMC Deputy Base Commander

Other Attendees

Nancy Abeles, Bethesda Crest Home Owners Association
David Alpert, Greater Greater Washington
Sara Benson, WMATA
Ian Brickell, Aecom
Andres Buonanno
Gerald Cichy, Maryland Transit Administration (MTA)
Pat Coccaro, Chevy Chase Park
Ellen Condon
Johann Dobak, Alpha Corp.
Melanie Fosnaught, Onyx Group
Council President Nancy Floreen
Chris Fronheiser, Aecom
Chris Gillis (Councilmember George Leventhal)
Warren Gray, URS Corp.
Jenny Hasliski, NIH Bike Club
Tom Hayden, NIH
Kathy Hochman, Chevy Chase Park
Richard Hoyer, ACT
Jennifer Hughes (County Executive Ike Leggett)
Marian Hull, NNMC
Greg Humes, Chevy Chase Valley Citizens Association
Jim Kelley, Alder Management
Quon Kwan, ACT
Brian Lange, URS Corp.
Miriam Lieberman, ACT
David M. (sp?)
Marilyn Mazuzan, Town of Oakmont
Claudia Meer, Edgemoor
Wendy Mellinger

Jim & Darlene Montgomery
Patricia Moskof, Rollingwood Citizens Assn.
Stu Nibley, Chevy Chase Park
Susan Petersen, NIH
Tom Robertson, BUP
Ben Ross, Action Committee for Transit
Rowan Salgado, Gables on Tuckerman
Frank Smith, Corman Construction
Cindy Snow, ACT
Debbie Spielberg (Councilmember Marc Elrich)
Alan Straus, URS Corp.
Ken Strickland, Chevy Chase Valley Citizens Association
Ben Teicher
Carol Thiele, Ayrlawn
Jamie Tiedeman, URS Corp.
Meghan Tierney, Gazette Newspapers
Nancy Voit, Ayrlawn
John Z. Wetmore, Perils for Pedestrians TV
Dan Willard, Locust Hill
Julie Woepke, Maryland DBED, Office of Military and Federal Affairs